



A paradigm shift to a next-generation intranet

McFarland Clinic was founded in 1946 and now has 1,300 employees across Iowa. They provide medical services in nearly every specialty. They depend on reams of forms, procedures, and documents. Their rapidly aging document management software was beginning to take a toll on people and productivity. Distance and documents were key problems to solve with a new intranet.

McFarland knew that a next-generation intranet would be a huge paradigm shift. The challenges of the shift are real, but so are the benefits. People who were never before connected are unified as an organization: engaging, sharing, collaborating, and communicating. Critical documents and forms are now easily located. This solved their biggest pain point – but it was only the beginning of the good news.

Company:	McFarland Clinic
Size & Locations:	1,300 Staff Across Iowa
Sector:	Healthcare
Interviewee:	Shelley Goecke, Marketing and Public Relations Director
Participation:	91% Weekly 99% Monthly



What is McFarland Clinic?

McFarland Clinic is central Iowa's largest physician owned multi-specialty clinic. A total of 220 physicians and advanced practice providers care for patients in 35 different medical specialties. McFarland Clinic has offices in 12 Iowa communities with additional communities served by physicians who travel to provide outreach patient care services. McFarland Clinic's total workforce includes over 1,300 employees and providers.

Distance & documents

McFarland Clinic identified two critical communications needs. McFarland's first communications challenge was that they have a lot of people spread out across a wide area. Just maintaining basic communication and awareness of what is going on in the business is a big challenge. "We can't call a meeting of 1,300 individuals and gather in a large auditorium," explained Shelley Goecke, Marketing and Public Relations Director.

The second is reliable access to correct content such as forms, policies, and procedures. These documents are updated frequently. Employees need to be able to find the documents quickly, know that the document is current, and know who is responsible for it if there are questions.

Before: An aging intranet

In 2000, McFarland rolled out its first intranet based on Microsoft FrontPage. There were a lot of band-aids and patches applied over the years, but it was clear that it was failing at its basic mission of providing access to dynamic content. Content was listed in an alphabetical index, without any search capabilities. "Our old intranet called the Pulse became just a messy closet over the years," said Shelley.

In the old system, people simply could not find the material they needed. The Marketing team at McFarland Clinic heard the need loud and clear. McFarland employees wanted something as easy to use as Google search.



Shelley describes how they got from FrontPage to the **Jostle**[®] intranet software:

“We switched from Microsoft to Google Apps in January of 2014. We knew after going onto that platform that we would likely utilize a Google product to help us construct a new intranet, and in fact we considered Google Sites to do that. As we got a little bit further into that investigation, we realized that Google Sites, although it has many positives, the search capability was not as robust as we had hoped. Our IT Director actually went on a mission to see what else is out there. He brought forward the Jostle platform for consideration. We quickly saw that it would be a paradigm shift with the Jostle intranet. It provided a platform that was completely different than anything our staff had experienced. It did indeed have the robust search we needed. It also provided the opportunity to see how people in the organization are connected and to be able to have discussions.”

Now McFarland enjoys the benefits of integrating Google Apps and the Jostle platform. This helps them both in terms of managing their content, as well as their user profiles. It's also great for their users who enjoy the convenience of single sign-on.

After: Search solved & some pleasant surprises

First and foremost, Shelley tells us, “staff can be kept more up-to-date on news and information of the organization.” With the old intranet, news was not published there because few people visited it on a daily basis. Instead, news was batched monthly in an e-newsletter. It was quickly buried in a mass of email, and lacked the immediacy that would make it relevant and compelling.

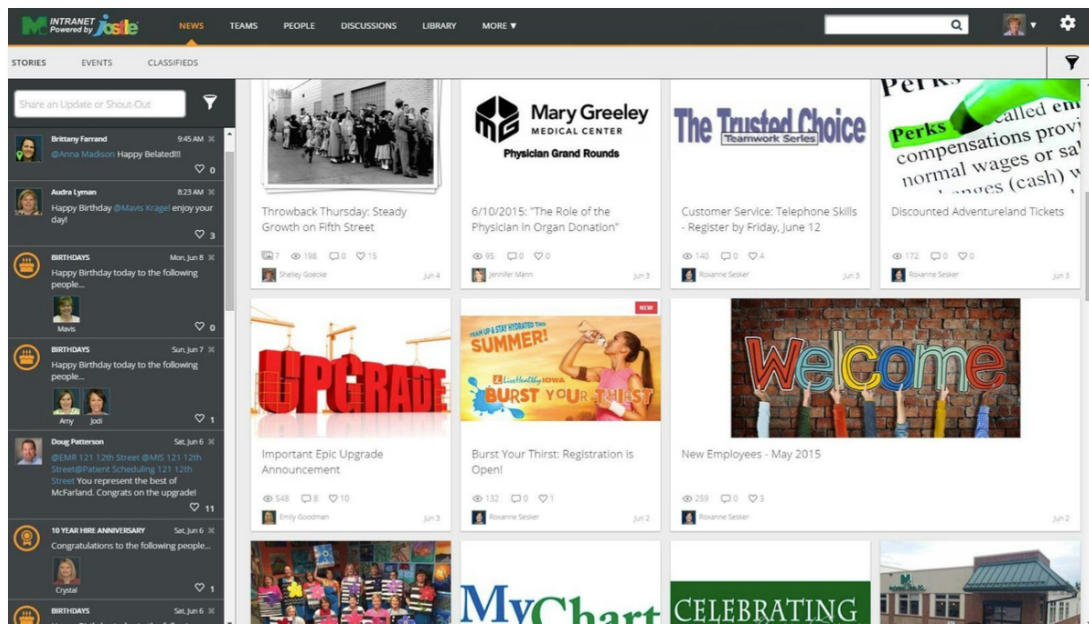
“Staff can be kept more up-to-date on news and information of the organization.”



Shelley Goecke, Marketing and Public Relations Director



McFarland staff are trained to select the Chrome icon once they log in and it defaults to the home page of the Jostle platform. Most employees login at least once a day. On average 91% of employees login at least once a week. The first thing they see is the current NEWS and they can comment or “like” it. It would seem that they like the liking. Reporters posting news articles can immediately see how many people open the article and how they feel about it. That’s a big benefit to the publisher of the article and to the company at large, as everyone becomes attuned to what people think is important.



A screenshot of NEWS view from McFarland's Jostle intranet

As expected, many people go to the new Jostle intranet to search for something very specific – a document or a form. The fact that LIBRARY volumes can be curated by different people and visible to specific groups has been a big help in ensuring that content is organized and reliable.

The search capability, however, has been transformative. The MIS team at McFarland posted this [Tech Tuesday Jostle NEWS video](#) feature to showcase to staff members just how easy search really is. It's not just content that people search for. It's people themselves.



Shelley explains: “We’re spread out over a big geography. You’re not always face-to-face with people you’re emailing or talking with on the phone. People want to see what their colleagues look like. Sometimes they need to follow up with someone you don’t know well. Maybe you caught her first name, Robin, but you can’t remember her last name and you want to send her an email. Now you can use that search box in the Jostle platform and see how many Robins, for example, are in the organization and be able figure out which Robin you need to talk to.”

The third most popular feature of the new intranet is the “MORE” view. People also like the convenience of easily adding their own URLs to sites that help them do their job. It’s a simple way to keep the intranet relevant and personal for everyone.

The business impact: Learning & participation

When we first spoke to Shelley for this report, they’d only been live with the **Jostle** platform for about five weeks. But already they had indications that things were different. For example, McFarland buys a large volume of Dell computers, so Dell offers them an employee discount as a perk. In the past, HR posted employee perks on the old intranet. This time they posted the perk in a Jostle intranet NEWS article. And a couple of days later Dell called McFarland HR to express their delight in the number of people who took advantage of the offer. They’d never had much response in the past.

They are receiving important feedback from staff. Here are some comments which reflect common themes from staff:

“I like the feel of the Jostle intranet. It feels like a community with the shout-outs and likes/ comments on news articles.”

“The experience brings closeness between those who may have only known a name in the past. It will help bring McFarland Clinic employees together as a team.”

“I love the ability to view teams and committees. Sometimes it is hard to know the professional connection people have with one another, this is a tool that will benefit me in my job.”

“The search bar is so easy to use and I can find anything so far that I have been looking for...way to go Jostle!!!!”



McFarland has also experienced some immediate engagement with their weekly Throwback Thursday posts. The communications team posts photos from the McFarland archives. McFarland will soon be celebrating the 70th anniversary of their founding in 1946. These pictures have been very popular and make everyone feel part of a larger whole, all focused on a long tradition of providing the best possible care for patients.



A "Throwback Thursday" article from the McFarland Jostle intranet

Launch strategy

Like most Jostle customers, McFarland put considerable thought into their rollout. McFarland's core intranet team consisted of people from HR, IT, and Marketing. They discussed the Google integration, the content LIBRARY, and the promotions plan. The launch included what they called a "step-in" rollout. First they brought in a few leaders and

management – about 21 in all. Then they rolled out to the rest of management. A scavenger hunt helped to get directors exploring the new platform.

Then they started to get the message out to the entire staff and utilized a CEO video message to [preview the benefits of their Jostle intranet](#).

One of the big concerns prior to launch was training. McFarland staff use a lot of sophisticated systems, and they expressed concerns about the availability and complexity of training for the Jostle platform. Except they didn't need much more than another round of the scavenger hunt and some encouragement. Among the many fun ways they promoted the new intranet to the staff prior to launch was [this clever video](#).

“It's so easy, we didn't need training.”



Shelley Goecke, Marketing and Public Relations Director

The business impact

McFarland is off to a great start. Thanks to their new Jostle intranet they are feeling much more connected. They quickly achieved very high engagement rates - over 90% weekly.

The big quick win has been quick access to business critical documents. People are really enjoying the Jostle platform search function, which is making it much faster for them to find what they need.

We'll be staying in close touch to see how this new level of connectedness and information sharing across their dispersed organization affects McFarland's culture and operating efficiency.



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Shelley Goecke, Marketing and Public Relations Director

About Jostle Corporation

Jostle is the creator of a new kind of intranet that is designed to help leaders engage their workforce. Its elegance and relevance yield exceptional participation rates – exceeding five times industry standards. Jostle’s intranet is turnkey, cloud-based, and requires no IT resources. For more information contact info@jostle.me or visit us online at www.jostle.me.

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